

Chapter Twenty-Five: A New Day, A New Mind

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Phera POV:

The morning light filtered through the sheer curtains of my room, gently waking me. I stretched lazily, the soft sheets sliding against my skin, feeling a strange blend of nostalgia and unfamiliarity. It was my old room in the Red Moon Packhouse, but things had changed over the years. The walls were repainted in a calming shade of lavender, and the furniture updated, but there were remnants of my childhood scattered about—old pictures, a few stuffed animals, and some cherished books.

Rolling out of bed, my feet met the plush carpet. My movements were a mix of trepidation and excitement. Today, I was supposed to meet with Axel regarding my role in the pack's financial division and also discuss the female warrior training schedule.

I made my way to the adjoining bathroom, glimpsing my reflection. My hair was a wild tangle, but my eyes sparkled with determination. I quickly freshened up, letting the cool water chase away the vestiges of sleep, and chose a professional-looking outfit from my closet.

Downstairs in the kitchen, the aroma of brewing coffee greeted me. Pouring myself a cup, I sat at the breakfast bar, taking a moment to gather my thoughts. A soft chime indicated a message on my phone.

Meet me at the finance wing at 10. - Axel

I checked the time, giving myself enough minutes to have

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a quick breakfast. Just as I was finishing up, there was a gentle knock on my door. Opening it, I found a young she-wolf holding a folder.

"Luna Phera," she began shyly, her gaze not quite meeting mine, "This is the current training schedule for the female warriors.

The rustling of papers stirred the tranquillity of the morning as I sifted through the schedule Axel had sent over to me. My fingers brushed against the intricate details of the financial documents intertwined with the training regimen I'd requested. The weight of my new responsibilities pressed upon my shoulders, but not in a burdensome way. Instead, it felt like an old cloak I was familiar with, just a bit dusty from disuse.

As I mentally charted out my day, the memory of last night's encounter with Damon threatened to cloud my focus. The balcony, the stars, the soft light—they were all backdrops to a conversation that had resonated with suppressed emotions and unspoken confessions. The kiss on the cheek, gentle yet profound, seemed to hold the echoes of countless unspoken words between us.

A smirk crept up my lips, recalling the warmth of his breath, the measured depth of his voice, and the way he'd looked at me—not as the Luna of the Red Moon Pack, but as his Luna. It was a testament to our intertwined fates and the delicate dance we were navigating between the past and a hopeful future.

A soft buzz diverted my attention. Grabbing my phone, I saw a message from Betty:

Heard you got the schedules today. How's the mighty Luna faring? Oh, and any juicy details from last night's

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stargazing with Alpha Damon? We're dying here! - B

Chuckles threatened to break free. Leave it to Betty to blend teasing with genuine curiosity. Before I could craft a response, Reese chimed in:

Seriously, Phera. We need the tea. But also, remember, we've got your back, no matter what. - R

It was heartening how amidst the whirlwind of changes, the camaraderie with Betty and Reese remained an unwavering constant. Replying with a playful emoji, I texted,

One step at a time, ladies. All in good time.

Setting aside the phone, I decided to take a stroll through the pack grounds. The soft murmur of conversations, the laughter of playing pups, and the distant sounds of warriors training provided a harmonious backdrop to my thoughts.

However, for all the ambient noise and activity, Damon's words from last night looped in my head—a soothing lullaby that hinted at promises and new beginnings. The journey ahead was filled with questions and challenges, yet with every step, the walls I had constructed around my heart seemed to waver, making room for emotions I had long tried to stifle. As the sun cast its golden rays, I took a deep breath, embracing the world around me, knowing that whatever the future held, I wasn't walking into it alone.

The hours seemed to blur, and before I realized, the sun was at its zenith, signaling it was time for my noon meeting with Axel. The gravel crunched underfoot as I made my way to the main pack office, a large timber structure designed with traditional pack motifs and state-

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of-the-art amenities, representing the beautiful blend of heritage and the present.

The large mahogany door opened to reveal a bustling office, pack members attending to their duties with an intense focus. Yet, a silent acknowledgment was passed, a nod of respect in my direction as the Luna. It was still a lot to digest, being back in this world that felt familiar yet held so much newness.

Axel's office was at the end of a long corridor, adorned with portraits of past Alphas and Lunas. I could feel my footsteps resonate with a sense of purpose. With each step, memories of our shared past, the games, the pranks, and the adolescent dreams, returned with renewed vigor.

His door was slightly ajar, and without needing an invitation, I pushed it open. Inside, Axel was hunched over a desk cluttered with papers and electronic tablets, deep in thought. His dark hair, the exact shade as Damon's, was ruffled in a way that suggested he'd run his fingers through it multiple times. He looked up, gray eyes mirroring a storm of emotions, surprise being the most evident.

"Phera," he breathed, standing up so swiftly the chair skidded a little behind him. "You're early."

"Time management," I replied with a smirk, "something I picked up in California."

The room felt simultaneously familiar and foreign. The aroma of pine and musk, a scent distinctly Axel's, wafted around. As he looked up, his gray eyes, almost identical to Damon's and Zane's, held a combination of surprise, joy, and a tinge of melancholy.

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"Phera," he acknowledged, standing up. 1

There was a warmth in his voice, but also a reservation, as if he was treading on a fragile path. I cleared my throat, aiming to keep the conversation strictly professional for now.

"Axel, I've gone through the schedule and jotted down a few points about my role in the pack's finances and the training sessions. We should discuss the specifics."

He motioned for me to sit opposite him, which I did. As we began to discuss, the conversation shifted from mere pack logistics to more personal territories.

"You've done quite well in California," he commented, scanning through some papers. "The strategies you've implemented, the deals you've brokered... it's impressive."

I tilted my head slightly,

"Thank you, but it was a different world there. Here, I have to relearn certain dynamics."

There was a pause. The weight of our shared past, the void of years spent apart, hung heavily between us. Axel interlocked his fingers, his gaze contemplative.

"Phera," he began, choosing his words carefully, "we... I know there's a lot to address, mistakes we've made, choices we've taken. But seeing you here, involved in the pack's matters, it means a lot."

I met his gaze. There was sincerity in his eyes, but I wasn't ready to dive deep into emotional waters yet.

"Axel, there's a time for personal discussions. But right now, let's focus on the pack."

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He nodded, but there was an unmistakable glint of sadness in his eyes.

"Alright, about the training sessions. How do you intend to approach the training for the female warriors?"

We delved into the details, discussing strategies, potential challenges, and new techniques. As the hours passed, the conversation eased. The underlying tension began to melt, replaced by the camaraderie we once shared. We debated, disagreed, laughed, and reminisced. It felt like the beginning of healing, a step towards mending the frayed bonds.

By the time we concluded, the sky outside was painting shades of twilight. Axel rose from his chair, stretching.

"It's been a productive day," he said, his voice softer, "and Phera, regardless of the past, it's good to work alongside you again."

The corners of my mouth tugged into a smile, the first genuine one since my return.

"Yes," I replied, "it certainly is."

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